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IN BLACKSTONE HALL

THE SMILE OF FRANCE

MOST of us at some time have been held by the charm of the drawings of the Old Masters. Sometimes, comparing an early, tentative sketch with the complete and irreproachable altarpiece of which it was the forerunner, we have felt a pang of disappointment at the finished work, and a renewed pleasure in looking back to the study in ink or sanguine. We have felt in the sketch a sense of intimacy, a suggestion in the very omissions, of a mutual understanding between ourselves and the artist; a scarcely confessed appreciation of his playfulness with the

crumbling materials in his hand; and we have recognized a challenge and sometimes almost a wink of invitation to our dulled imaginative faculties, which has led us onward like the scent of "green things growing."

In a similar way, the evidences of a people's regard for its little children win from us a sympathy which has its own intimate ramifications. In the articles addressed to children's use there too are playful imaginative touches, homely simplifications which the miniature scale of children's costume and children's toys compel, delicate hints of a recognition of that secret realm of childhood which we all know as we know ourselves. Here too, are playful omissions in a world of "let's pretend" where things are mutually understood and where the ignited imagination leaps to fill the shadowed corners with its fire.

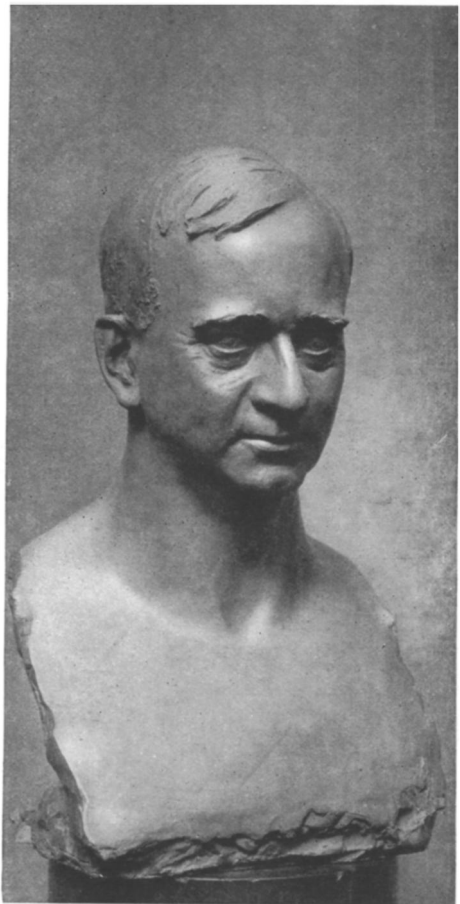
It was in a true sense an inspiration which led M. Barthelemy, the Consul of the Republic of France, to arrange for Chicago the exhibition of toys which has filled the first gallery of Gunsaulus Hall. At a stroke he has laid before us the most delicate, brave, and lovely revelation which could be made of France in this hour. M. Barthelemy says, "I wish you to know the smile of France." The "smile of France"! It is like the tender flush of new-sprung green, coming over a burnt landscape after warm rains have fallen.

And so it comes to pass that there is a deep and earnest lesson for us in this exhibition of the toys of France. Here is a nation, wounded almost to the heart, which still can turn and think in its pain, playfully, happily, laughingly for

its children! Not many of the toys are war toys. The brave and healthy spirit which has produced them seems to recognize that the war is for an end which is beyond the war. But there are the Poilu "before," the Poilu "after," the Tommy, and Sandy, which are masterpieces. Then there are Boche prisoners in their great gray coats—multitudes of them. There are sentry-boxes with blue-clad soldiers huddled in them, and above all there are numbers of lovely ladies and gentlemen in silks and satins and homespun and fine linen. Everywhere one observes the child nature tenderly guarded against bitterness. It is child-land. There is no "hymn of hate." A nation with the spirit to turn so far from its sorrow while its sorrow is still a fact, a nation with this upward-welling sense of life may, when the steel strikes home, bleed, and bleed abundantly. It cannot die.

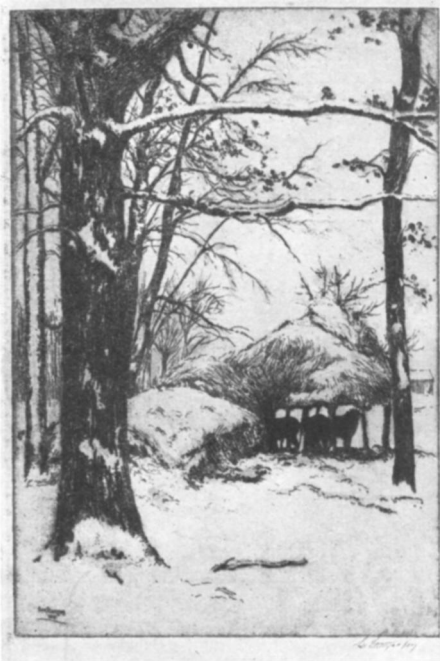
NEW YORK CITY at this time is faring through a discussion as to whether the meadows in Central Park shall or shall not be dug up in trenches, strung with barbed wire, pitted with shell-holes and made into a "no-man's land" to promote interest in the war. Honest, serious persons are ranged on both sides of the question, and the newspapers seem to be divided on the issue. It is not a question of whether or not such a sacrifice ought to be made to win the war. If the thing which is proposed will in the slightest degree throw the final balance toward victory, the question answers itself. But will it?

Our parks are no experiment—no luxury. They are necessary to cities as



PORTRAIT OF CHARLES W. HAWTHORNE
BY ALBIN POLASEK
PURCHASED FROM THE LOGAN FUND

air is necessary in a sleeping chamber. The fundamental idea is that contact with nature rests and soothes the individual mentally and physically, and the millions of pilgrims to the parks on Sundays and holidays prove that nature has corroborated the theory by establishing an instinct for this very thing. The question simply is, shall we in this year of 1918 need the solace of nature less than we have in other years?



THE SHELTER—BY LEE STURGES
EXHIBITION OF ETCHINGS

We might also ask what would be the choice of the convalescent soldier who returns from the battlefield to his home city.

The flagellants of the thirteenth century have shown us by what mysterious threads pure religious ecstasy is drawn to the mad abuse of the human body. Is there a similar tie between our rightful national enthusiasm and the impulse to disfigure our cities at this time?

A GREAT ESTHETIC work as well as a great business activity is in the hands of the Department of Pictorial Publicity. Vast editions of posters have been issued since the war began. In America these have grown steadily but

slowly better from month to month. At length a responsible body has been created which will pass upon the posters and, it is to be hoped, upon the entire poster program. As a result of this, the standard will be increased in effectiveness and doubtless the public will be protected from the type of poster which may be popular but which wholly misinterprets the spirit of the nation, or which so infringes upon the canons of taste as to do as much harm as good. Mr. Creel and the Secretaries of War and of the Navy are members of the Central Committee on Pictorial Publicity, and the work of the Chicago Division, acting under them, has already begun.

We in America have learned almost since the war has come upon us, the mighty force of the visual appeal, the possibilities for effectiveness and charm that may lie in the poster. It has been a great discovery and worth years of endeavor. We have learned in this the first principle of advertising. Instinct and good intentions, however, will not alone teach us the second.

The East again furnishes us with an object lesson. Twenty copies of a single poster pasted in a crooked line around three sides of a subway entrance will not have twenty times the advertising force of one such poster, thoughtfully placed. And yet, in this time of national economy, twenty posters, together with all the labor of printers, paper-makers, lumbermen and railway-employees, required to make them possible, have been attempting to do the work of one in just this way, in many a subway station of Greater New York. Chicago may still avoid this error. Slowly and laboriously

we have brought a certain beauty to our city. To permit it to be defaced at this time is to give the enemy an initial victory over our civilization without his spending a shot to earn it.

From the practical standpoint, nothing will so quickly still the eloquent voice in which the poster speaks as will this very abuse of it. The poster is a tremendous power so long as it springs into view and surprises the eye with its freshness and beauty in unexpected places. The moment its charm and surprise are neutralized by undue repetition, it ceases to function. The moment it disfigures by being misplaced, or hangs in unheeded, tattered fragments from every wall and post, it may evoke resentment, and its whole force be projected against its original purpose.

Finally, if indeed we are on the eve of great sacrifices, is it the heroic thing to go, dishevelled and disfiguring ourselves, or shall we maintain to the end with colors flying, that beauty and dignity which our earnest and toiling civilization has been able to achieve?

COMING EXHIBITIONS

ON May 9 four exhibitions will be installed as follows: the annual exhibition of American water colors, pastels, and miniatures; an exhibition of paintings by Frank V. Dudley; and the annual exhibitions by the Art Students' League and the Chicago Camera Club. Exhibitions from important private collections will be included among the summer attractions in the galleries. Wood engravings by Rudolph Ruzicka will be shown in the Print Room from August 14 to September 14.



SUNLIGHT AND SHADOWS, NO. 3
BY DONALD SHAW MAC LAUGHLAN
PURCHASED FROM THE E. H. STICKNEY FUND

NEW EXHIBITION OF PRINTS

Beginning May 15, for two weeks, the Print Room will house a small exhibition of lithographs and woodcuts by Birger Sandzén, the Swedish artist, who is Professor of Aesthetics and Dean of the School of Fine Arts in Bethany College, Kansas.

Professor Sandzén studied with Zorn and Bergh in Stockholm and with Aman-Jean in Paris, and in 1894 came to America to take a position in Bethany College. Since that time, he has devoted himself to the interpretation of western country, working in various media—oil, water color, lithography, and wood engraving. He has found the southwestern United States vitally picturesque, and it is his chosen mission to make others see its beauty.